

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GEORGE 02522 131958Z
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00
SIL-01 SP-02 USIA-06 AID-05 NSC-05 CIEP-01 TRSE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3864
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
USDOC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L GEORGETOWN 2522

E.O. 116520: GDS
TAGS: EGEN, ELAB, GY
SUBJECT: GUYBAU WORKERS STRIKE AT LINDEN

REF: GEORGETOWN 2505 (NOTAL)

1. SUNDAY'S "CHRONICLE" (DECEMBER 12) REPORTED BAUXITE WORKERS HAVE CONTINUED THEIR STRIKE AT LINDEN OVER THE PAST WEEKEND. DURING WEEKEND, VIOLENCE FLARED BETWEEN POLICE AND STRIKERS AND 15 STRIKERS WERE ARRESTED FRIDAY NIGHT. ON SATURDAY, RIOT POLICE USED TEAR GAS TO BREAK UP A DEMONSTRATION OUTSIDE THE JAIL WHERE THE ARRESTED STRIKERS WERE BEING HELD. ADDITIONAL ARRESTS WERE MADE ON SATURDAY DURING THIS ENCOUNTER. THE "CHRONICLE" STORY CONTINUED THAT THE GUYANA MINE WORKERS' UNION (GMWU) HAS DISASSOCIATED ITSELF FROM THE STRIKE.

2. APPROXIMATELY 5,000 PEOPLE ARE EMPLOYED BY GUYBAU AT LINDEN. SOME SOURCES INDICATE THAT 50-80 PERCENT OF THE WORK FORCE IS ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN THE STRIKE, WITH THE REMAINDER OF THE MINE AND ALUMINA PLANT WORKERS SIMPLY COMPLYING. PERTAINING TO SATURDAY'S DISTURBANCE, THE "CHRONICLE" SIMPLY STATED THAT THE DEMONSTRATION "WAS STARTED" BY 35 PERSONS. OTHER SOURCES INDICATE, HOWEVER, THAT SEVERAL HUNDRED PEOPLE WERE INVOLVED IN THE POLICE

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 GEORGE 02522 131958Z

STATION INCIDENT. THE "CHRONICLE" DID REPORT,

THAT NOT ONLY THE POLICE, BUT GUYBAU
CONSTABLES AND A DETACHMENT OF THE RIOT SQUAD
(SEE REFTTEL) WERE USED TO QUELL THE PROTESTORS..

3. ECONOMICALLY, LINDEN IS CRUCIAL. BAUXITE
PRODUCTION IS MUCH NEEDED IN THIS SAGGING ECONOMY.
TO TIE IT OVER THE ECONOMIC HARD TIMES AHEAD,
THE GOG IS GOING TO HAVE TO APPROACH THE INTER-
NATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND COMMERCIAL
BANKS FOR LOANS. THE GOG RECOGNIZES THE
IMPORTANCE OF ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL STABILITY
IN ITS APPROACH.

4. POLITICALLY, LINDEN IS A PNC
STRONGHOLD. THE INCIDENTS WHICH OCCURRED IN
LINDEN IN THE EARLY 1960'S WERE BASICALLY
PRO-PNC. BAUXITE WAS ONE OF THE FIRST
INDUSTRIES TO BE NATIONALIZED. INDEED, LINDEN
IS ONE OF THE MOST PROSPEROUS AREAS OF GUYANA. GIVEN
THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, THE STRIKE AT LINDEN CAN BE
PERCEIVED AS A POLITICAL AS WELL AS AN ECONOMIC
SETBACK FOR THE PNC.
MCCOY

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Message Attributes

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